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SERMON

Occasion'd by the

Happy Accession

OF

KING GEORGE

TO THE

Throne of *Great Britain, &c.*

By STRICKLAND GOUGH,
Minister in *Bristol.*

L O N D O N

Printed for DAN. JACKSON at the *Bible and
Three Crowns* in the *Poultry*, and JOSEPH PENN
Bookseller in *Bristol.* 1714.

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BY STRICKLAND GOUGH

Minister of State

LONDON

Printed by D. B. Jackson & Co. in the Strand

1760

To the Honourable

Sir William Asburst, Knight,

AND

Alderman of the City of LONDON.

SIR,

THE Zeal You always express'd
for the Protestant Succession
in the HOUSE OF HAN-
NOVER assures me, that You are
One of those who without Dissimulation
Rejoyce at the Happy Accession of
KING GEORGE to the Throne
of these Kingdoms. For which reason
I could not but conclude a Discourse up-
on so Agreeable a Subject would be Ac-
ceptable, tho' in it self consider'd, it
may have little to recommend it, but
its Honesty and Sincerity. It was
not, Sir, any Apprehension I had that
the following Discourse has those Embel-
lishments

The Dedication.

lishments which Men commonly look for in such Performances, but the very Joyful Occasion, which tempted me thus to address my self to You and the World. And that indeed was a powerful Temptation, which I was not able to resist. Who indeed can Forbear giving the most publick Testimonies of Joy they are capable of, when, instead of Having all at Stake, all that is Dear to us is now like to be Secur'd, not only to us, but to our Children after us? Nor can this be reasonably thought Inconsistent with paying the Debt we owe to the Memory of those Princes whom G O D has from time to time taken to Himself. Their truly obedient Subjects, of which number You was justly accounted by those who had the Honour to know you, have been as truly sorrowful for their Removal, so far as the Laws of G O D direct 'em to be so: But as we are not to sorrow for the Loss of private Relations, as if we had no Hope, so a mixture of Grief and Consolation on the Demise of such as
stood

The Dedication.

stood in a publick Relation to us, is not only Consistent, but Becoming. When our Domestick Relatives are taken away by Death, the Loss is frequently never to be repair'd. If a Parent dies, the Relation ceases for ever, and none can succeed to be one's Real Father or Mother in their room: But 'tis otherwise in the present Case. A Nation may enjoy many Political Parents one after another: Nor is it a Disrespect to affirm, that when one, whose Office it was to be a Nursing-Mother, is number'd among the Dead, Her Place May, and we believe Will, be compleatly fill'd by a Nursing-Father. Neither can we indeed well entertain a Grateful Remembrance of some of our deceased Governours, without being highly pleas'd at the Advancement of our **RIGHTFUL** and **LAWFUL SOVEREIGN**, who survives and succeeds them; forasmuch as They were the Happy Instruments of bringing about that Succession. You, Sir, I must repeat it to Your Honour,

was

The Dedication.

was ever a Sincere Admirer of that Invaluable Act of the Two Last Reigns, to which we are so much indebted for the KING who now fills the Throne, and for the INCOMPARABLE PRINCE his Son, with the rest of the Royal Family, from whom the greatest Things may justly be expected. You ever express'd your Satisfaction in the many Glorious Things done for the Liberties of Europe, and for the Good of these Kingdoms, under the Conduct of that Renowned General the Duke of Marlborough : You still retain an Honourable Sense of them, as indeed it is hardly possible they should be forgotten by True Britains, any more than that they should fail to shine with an illustrious Brightness in the Annals of Time. Whatever appear'd to be for the Common Good You always Rejoyc'd in : But the Act of Settlement for the Succession of the Crown in the Protestant Line was Your Peculiar Treasure ; as in the Reality of the Thing,

The Dedication.

so in your own Fixed Opinion and Apprehension: And, that it has now taken Effect, and been so peaceably executed hitherto, is accounted Matter of peculiar Thankfulness by You, and by All good Men. But, that I may no further trespass upon your Patience, I shall only beg Leave to assure Your Honour, that it is my Earnest Prayer to GOD, that You may yet live many Years, to see the SOVEREIGN you so justly love, and your COUNTRY, which you are so heartily concern'd for, settl'd beyond the Fears of Opposition or Disturbance; That the Requests of your Religious Father may be further answer'd, both to You and Yours; and, That when GOD shall at last remove you out of this Transitory World, He would shew you His Salvation in an Unchangeable one. I am,

Sir,
Your most Obligated,
Humble Servant,

Strickland Gough.

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Accession of King **G E O R G E** to the
Throne of *Great Britain*, &c.

A SERMON

ON THE

Happy Accession

OF

King GEORGE.

ISAIAH 49. 23.

And Kings shall be thy Nursing-Fathers, and their Queens thy Nursing-Mothers; they shall Bow down to thee with their Face towards the Earth, and lick up the Dust of thy Feet, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord; For they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me.

A
WE have in this Chapter a very Remarkable Account of the Great Success of the Gospel, and of the spreading of Christianity : It is a Prophecy concerning our Blessed Sa-
B viour,

viour, and of the Church of God after his coming into the World. This was till then confin'd to the *Jewish* Nation, and that too sometimes was dismally depress'd, particularly in the time of the Captivity: But after the Coming of Christ, the Prophet here 'foretells, that it would be extended to the *Gentile* World; so that they that were in Darkness, and the most desolate places, should be Enlarg'd and Comforted by his Presence. Here he declares the Certainty of this, by answering an Objection drawn from the Narrow and Afflicted State of the Church at that time: *Zion saith, The Lord hath Forsaken me, and my God hath Forgotten me*: This was the Objection which Unbelief brought against this Prophecy, and then here is the Answer to it; *Can a Woman Forget her sucking Child, that she should not have Compassion on the Son of her Womb? Yea, they may Forget, yet will I not Forget thee*, Vers. 14, 15. No tender Parent could have more Concern for a beloved Child, than God had for his Church; and that would engage him to take Care of it. As the Prophet thus ascertains the Truth of this, so he enlarges upon the Great Advantages the Church would enjoy in this Happy Day of its Extension and Advancement: He tells 'em, that *Light and Salvation* would then

then be carried to the ends of the Earth, Ver. 6. He describes a state of Spiritual Plenty and Satisfaction, which it will be remarkably blest'd with, Ver. 10. *They shall not hunger nor thirst, neither shall the Heat nor Sun smite them; for He that hath Mercy on them shall lead them, even by the Springs of Water shall he guide them.* And again, ver. 13. *Sing, O Heavens! and be joyful, O Earth! and break forth into singing, O Mountains! for the Lord hath comforted his People, and will have Mercy upon his Afflicted.* And among other Benefits which the Church should enjoy in this glorious Time, he mentions this as none of the least, That the Kings and Princes of the Earth should come into it, and employ their Power for its Use and Interest. Thus he observes, ver. 7. *Kings shall Hear and Arise, Princes also shall Worship, because of the Lord that is Faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and He shall chuse thee.* And then more at large in the Words of my Text, *Kings shall be thy Nursing-Fathers, and their Queens thy Nursing-Mothers, &c.*

In which Words we have three things observable, each of which I shall briefly consider, and then conclude with a short Application.

1st, The Duty of Kings and Princes towards the Church of CHRIST: They are to be *Nursing-Fathers and Nursing-Mothers* to it.

2^{dly}, That this is a mighty Privilege or Advantage to the Church, when Kings are thus *Nursing-Fathers* to it, and do Faithfully discharge the Duty before mention'd.

3^{dly}, The Consequence of these things express'd in those words, *And thou shalt know that I am the Lord; for they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me.*

First, The Duty of Kings and Princes towards the Church of CHRIST. Now this is express'd in a twofold Account of it, and accordingly consists in two things.

1st, The Care they are to take of it. They are to be *Nursing-Fathers and Nursing Mothers* to it: They are to shew the same Tendernefs, Affection, and Concern for it as Parents do for their Children; they are to bear it upon their Hearts by a most unfeigned Love. This is the first thing which occurs from the Relation of a Parent to a Child; How tenderly does he love it! and, how constantly does his Heart run out after it! Thus
does

does a Wise and a Religious Prince carry his People, as the High-Priest did the Children of *Israel*, upon his Breast, and his very Heart and Soul is engag'd for them; and this will dispose him to imploy his Thoughts for their Interest and Advantage; their Welfare is that which he will be continually contriving and studying to promote. He is a Monster of a Father who never thinks of his Child, and cares not whether he is sick or well, whether he starves or is comfortably provided for. And that Governor who by the Fear of G O D is influenc'd to act answerably to the Duty of his Place and Character, will in like manner imploy his Thoughts for the Good of his Subjects: Nor will he barely *think* of their Happiness, but *strive* to promote it, and imploy his Power as well as his Thoughts, for their Welfare and Felicity. 'Tis certain that this is the Great End which the Power of Princes is put into their Hands for; It is, that they may be a *Terrour to Evil-doers, and a Praise to them that do well*: 'Tis that *under them we may lead peaceable Lives, in all Godliness and Honesty*: 'Tis that we may *sit under our own Vine and Fig-tree, and none make us afraid* *. 'Tis for the Benefit of Mankind; and

* Rom. 13. 3, 4. 1 Tim. 2. 2. Mic. 4. 4.

and if they are in the Relation of Fathers and Mothers to their Subjects, 'tis plain they must act for their Good, and their *Authority* ought to be exerted for no other End. What should we think of that *Parent* who should bind almost all his Children in Chains, and send 'em to walk the Streets in Fetters of Iron, or perhaps put the Generality of 'em into Dungeons and Jails for no Reason, but to show his Power, or to keep 'em in awe, or because it was his Will that it should be so? If this is Barbarous and Unnatural, 'tis no otherwise in a KING, who is a Civil Parent, to employ his Authority over his People after the same manner. And this now would lead me to consider how many ways the Power of Magistrates is to be employ'd for the Good of those that govern; but I can only touch upon this, and briefly suggest to you, that they are to take care both of their Temporal and Spiritual Rights and Privileges; they are to see that one part of their Subjects do not oppress another. *Nehemiah*, who indeed was not a KING, but yet was a KING's Commissioner, observes how apt Unconscientious Magistrates are to let some of their Subjects loose upon the rest to injure them in their Rights, but declares how averse he was to following their Example, lest he should Sin against God

God by it. * *The Former Governors that had been before me, were chargeable unto the People, and had taken of them Bread and Wine, yea, even their Servants bore Rule over the People; but so did not I, because of the Fear of God.* He would not oppress them himself, nor permit his Officers to do so; and all those Magistrates who have the Fear of God before their Eyes, will be of the same Temper. And to the like purpose we find it urg'd upon Kings and Governors, That they should be *Just, Ruling in the Fear of the Lord*: That they should *remove Violence and Spoil, and execute Judgment and Justice, and deliver the Spoiled out of the Hands of the Oppressor; judge the Fatherless, and let the Cause of the Widow come before them: Establish their Thrones in Righteousness, scatter all Evil with their Eyes, but let their Eyes be upon the Faithful of the Land* †. In a word, whatever is for the good of the Subject, whatever is necessary to prevent their Ruin, nay, to make 'em a Flourishing and a Happy People, whatever is needful for the prosperity of their outward Estate, and especially for the good of their Souls, whatever is requisite to make the Interest of Religion Thrive and Encrease; if it has been Discourag'd and

* Neh. 5. 15. † Ezek. 45. 9. Jer. 22. 3. Isa. 1. 24.
a Sam. 23. 3. Prov. 16. 12. ch. 20. 8. Psal. 101. 6.

and seems to be Declining, to Restore and Revive it; and when it is thus in some measure Recover'd, to promote it more and more by the greatest Encouragements can be given to it: All this is the Duty of them that Rule, and all this they must give an account of. They are to be Nurses to their People, and to the Church and Interest of God among them, to feed and cherish it, that it may grow up to Perfection. They are to be Conservators of the Church's Rights and Privileges: They are to Watch over it and keep off, nay, to Chastise its Enemies when they Assault and Injure it, and to do all they are capable of for its Encouragement and Improvement. So that its really an awful Charge which is committed to Kings, and one of the weightiest Trusts which is put into their Hands: And their High Condition does not so much merit the Envy of their Subjects, as the Burthen which lies upon their Shoulders, and the Duty they must one Day answer for to the Great King and Judge of the World, calls for a most tender Concern for them, the utmost Honour we can pay them, the best Supports we can contribute to their Encouragement, and our most hearty Prayers to that GOD who has the Hearts of KINGS at his disposal, to incline and assist them to be Faithful.

2dly,

2dly, The Honour and Obedience they are to pay to it. You have this describ'd in Expressions, if not very agreeable to the Customs and Notions which prevail in this Age, and in these parts of the World, yet suitable to the manner of the Eastern Countries, where *Isaiah* utter'd this Prophecy: *They shall bow down to thee with their Face towards the Earth, and lick up the Dust of thy Feet.* This (in the modern Phrase) would signifie no less than Adoration; and some would be apt to expound it of an ambitious Desire in the Priests to tread upon the Necks of KINGS. But the design of the Prophet is only to shew, that the Greatest Men would, in the Gospel-times, come into the Church of CHRIST, and humbly submit to the Laws which He has given to it, and think it not unbecoming them so to do. In the Respects which in those Eastern Parts they paid to each other, especially when they offer'd their Civilities to those whom they thought above them, it was usual to prostrate themselves upon the Ground, and sometimes to kiss their Feet, and the very Earth they trod upon. Thus the most Sovereign Princes are to yield their Homage to the Head of the Church, even to Him *by whom Kings Reign and Princes decree Justice.* The Psalmist, who was himself a KING, calls upon them to do

so. * *Be wise now therefore, O ye Kings, be instructed, ye Judges of the Earth; serve the Lord with Fear, and Rejoyce with Trembling: Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way when his Wrath is kindled but a little.* Acts of Worship and Adoration are daily and weekly to be perform'd to the Heavenly KING by all, not excepting those who amongst Men are esteem'd the most Honourable. And as the Head of the Church is to be worship'd by them with the profoundest Reverence, so his Laws are to be universally obey'd by them. They are not indeed to be subject to the Humours and Caprices of every one who calls himself an Ambassador of CHRIST. The pretended-universal Bishop has no just Claim to such unlimited Obedience; nor can any of the Inferior Governors of the Church, or all of them together, without the highest Presumption, pretend thus to bind their Kings in Chains: Nay, an absolute Authority, and a Power to require what they please, is more than they have a Right to, over the meanest of the People. The real Ministers of CHRIST must Govern only by the Laws of CHRIST. But He has a unbounded Authority, and this even the most Absolute Monarchs

narchs are oblig'd to submit to. The Reason is very plain, They are his Vicegerents, his Deputies, who Govern under him, and consequently are accountable to him. Their Authority is deriv'd from him, and therefore ought to be employ'd for him. They receive their Credentials at his Hands, and they act beyond their Commission if they violate the least of his Commandments. I meddle not here with that Question, How far the Power of the Prince is deriv'd from the People: It is confess'd by all, that it is originally deriv'd from G O D, and who can imagine He gives any Man a Power to break his own Laws? which, in the present Case, would be to set up his Representatives to be his Equals or Superiors. It is plain then, that the Laws of the Church, or to speak more properly, the LAWS of CHRIST, who is the Head of the Church, do oblige the Consciences even of Princes and Potentates, and none are to think themselves exempted from paying universal and constant Obedience to them. I will only add one Observation more under this Head: In the former Expression, Governors are said to be Nurses to the Christian Church; and here they are describ'd as its Children. A Child may be oblig'd to perform the Office of a Nurse to his Parent, when

by Age, Poverty, or Sickness, he is reduc'd so far as to want his Assistance. KINGS are to be as Fathers to the Church, in respect of the Care they are to take of it: But the Church is the Mother of all that are born within it; all its Members, whether they are Magistrates or Subjects, are its Children, and as such they are to Honour and Obey it.

2dly, That this is a mighty Privilege or Advantage to the Church, when KINGS are thus *Nursing-Fathers* to it, and do faithfully discharge the Duty we have been discoursing of; for thus it is represented here as the Privilege of the Church under the Gospel, that the KINGS of the Earth shall not only come into it, but nurse it, and provide for it. And this must needs be a mighty Privilege if you consider it,

1st, In a Temporal Respect.

2dly, In a Spiritual one.

First, In a Temporal Respect. And when this is the Case of any People, they are secure as to all those Blessings which are most valuable for this World; I mean they are secure of 'em so far, that they need not fear their being depriv'd of

of 'em by those whose Government they are plac'd under. Such Righteous Governors will not rob them of their Lives, Liberties, and Estates, as Tyrants do, at their Will and Pleasure; they consider themselves as set up by God to be for the praise of them that do well, and accordingly they'll maintain 'em in their Properties, and do their utmost to preserve 'em so, that they may descend to their Children after 'em. 'Tis true, when Magistrates are Persons of Sense as well as Piety, they will not easily resign the just Prerogatives of their Crowns. They will, and they ought to guard against the Encroachments of evil Men. But then they will never strike at the Liberties of the People, but be as faithful to uphold the Rights of their Subjects, as they will be tenacious of their own. And is it not a desirable Blessing to live under such Princes? They are certainly some of the most valuable Gifts of Heaven, and we ought to think upon such an occasion as the *Psalmist* upon another, *That Happy is that People which is in such a case* *. If we represent to our own Thoughts the Misery of those whose KINGS are the Reverse of such as we are now speaking of, we can't but look upon ourselves as unspeakably

* Psal. 144. 15.

ably Happy. No Person is safe under such a Tyrannical Government. If he be the most dutiful Subject that it is possible for him to be, if he be never so faithful both to his GOD, and to his KING at the same time, yet he has not one Privilege that he can call his own. His very Life is not his own, but he is liable to have it taken away from him whenever the Tyrant pleases; and that may be upon a thousand ungrounded Jealousies, on the least pique of Humor, nay, sometimes only to gratify a Fancy which delights in Cruelty and Mischief. Corrupt Nature inclines us to almost every thing that is Evil; and there is scarce any Disposition more incident to it than this of Cruelty. How pleas'd was *Nero* with the Burning of *Rome*, when he diverted himself with playing upon his Harp while the Metropolis of his Empire was in Flames? And that which was so much in Fashion among the *Romans*, casting their Malefactors, nay, the poor Christians themselves, to the Lions, and to the wild Beasts, to be devour'd in view of the People, as a Diversion to them, gives an awful Notion of our Inclinations towards one-another, how naturally Men delight in Blood, and how apt they are to Rejoyce in one-another's Destruction. The Scripture likewise acquaints us, that *it is a Sport to some*

some Persons to do Mischief, and that they will (like Madmen) cast about Firebrands, Arrows, and Death, and deceive their Neighbours, saying, Are we not in Sport *? Now if this be so natural to Men in this fallen Condition, have we not Reason both to provide as much as is possible against it, and to be thankful when the Princes we live under are of a better Temper, Mild in their Dispositions, and Merciful in their Principles and Practices; so that we need not fear being undone, but may hope to be protected by them? And this must be regarded as the Greater Happiness, because so many other Nations are in the miserable Condition I but now mention'd. How few are those Countries where Liberty and Property is secur'd, in comparison of those where the People are either absolute Slaves, or in a great measure so? And that we are not in the same state of Vassalage and Servitude with the far greater part of Mankind, is a Mercy we cannot be too thankful for. Christian States themselves are not exempted, but may fall into this unhappy Case as well as *Heathens* or *Mahometans*: Nay, we often hear of a *Protestant* as well as a *Papist* Tyranny; which, that we are deliver'd from it, is the highest Temporal Privilege we can boast of. 2dly,

* Prov. 10. 23. ch. 26. 18, 19.

2dly, In a Spiritual Respect. Such a KING is a Blessing to the very Souls of his Subjects. Religion is in the likeliest way to prosper under his Administration; it can scarce fail of Thriving and getting Ground, by the Blessing of GOD; and that Blessing is not to be thought wanting to a Pious and Prudent Prince, such as we have been describing. Indeed, if the People refuse to fall in for the promoting their own Spiritual Interest, they may expect a Curse instead of a Blessing: In which Case the Pious KING has the Encouragement which a Faithful Minister has when he deals with an Unfaithful People, he shall *save his own Soul*; and he may say in the words of the Prophet, ** Tho' Israel be not gather'd, yet shall I be Glorious in the Eyes of the Lord, and my God shall be my Strength.* But when Prince and People unite in their Endeavours, how is it possible that a God of Mercy and Grace should be wanting, or that Religion should be otherwise than upon the growing hand? Vice and Sin must needs be put out of Countenance, when thus powerfully and openly oppos'd. Several Things there are which promote a Nation's Spiritual Prosperity in such a Happy Reign. The Example of the Prince

* Isaiah 49. 5.

Prince will dispose the Subject to the love of Virtue and Piety, at least to a profession of it. It will bring Religion into Fashion, when Men see their KING is in the same Resolution with the KING of *Israel*, who would *not know a wicked Person, nor suffer him to tarry in his Sight* *. Their Interest will oblige them to put on the Form of Godliness, if not the Power. Nor will the Prince's Prayers be wanting to this End. The Regal and Sacerdotal Functions were united in ancient Times, so that He who was a KING to Rule the People, was also a Priest to Bless them. The Scripture frequently declares how fervently the KINGS of *Israel* pray'd for their Subjects; of which it gives us the Instances of *David*, *Solomon*, and *Jehoshaphat*, &c. And Good Princes will not think it Improper to follow them in this Pious Practice; and the Prayer of the Righteous will be apt to avail much. Besides, the Liberty of serving GOD according to our Consciences, is what we may reasonably expect from a Prince of this Stamp and Character. A Religious Persecuter is a Contradiction in Terms. That KING who is Himself heartily in the Interest of Religion, will be so far from persecuting, that He will give all due Encouragement

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* Psal. 101. 4, 7.

to it in others. He will permit them to pray to God, to praise him, and to hear his Word as much as they please. He will suffer them to be as Devout and Serious as they will, nay, He will rejoyce to see them all uniting in the common Worship of the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, tho' they don't perform it in the same Mode and Way, but differ perhaps as much in the Form of their Worship, as they unite in the Substance. He knows that the Substantials of Religion is all that's worth Mens contending about; and this He will never suffer to be disputed out of the Church and World. But while this is maintain'd in the *Purity* and *Power* of it, He will not allow the Consciences of His Subjects to be strain'd upon in lesser Things. His *Principles* are a Defence against all Force in Matters of Religion, except that Argumentative Compulsion our Saviour speaks of: * *Compel them to come in, that my House may be full.* In a word, He is sensible, that Persecution seldom or never makes real Converts, but that Liberty without Licentiousness is for the Honour of God, the most effectual Means of Encouraging true Faith and Holiness, and the most probable Way to prevail with ingenious Minds in those things

things wherein they may be mistaken. To conclude this Head, a thoroughly-Religious Governor will study to unite those that are under his Authority as far as is consistent with the Rules of *Prudence* and *Christianity*; and *Union* among a People is, next to the Providence of GOD, their strongest Bulwark both in their Civil and Religious Capacity. Division seldom fails of being attended with Destruction, if not speedily stop'd; but the Gates of Hell can't prevail against a Church and Kingdom which is thoroughly united. I don't mean, that we must necessarily unite so, as for all of us to wear the same Fringes and Fashions in Religion, which is no more requisite than that we should all *do so* in our Habits: But we must all worship the same GOD, we must all go to him thro' the same Mediator; and we must all resolve to bear with one-another in those disputable Things wherein good Men never yet were, nor never will be of the same Opinion till they come to Heaven. This latter is certainly a Religious Union, as great a Solecism as it may seem to be, that Christians should be united at the same time that they differ. It is the only Union we can expect in this World; and blessed be GOD, it is sufficient to answer the End of Godliness. Nay, where there is such a Union of Affections, Religion

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will

will advance in Proportion to the encrease of Love and Charity: Which, therefore, may the GOD of Peace, in his infinite Mercy, grant us before it be too late.

It remains now briefly to consider,

3dly, The Consequence of all this, express'd in the close of these Words, *And thou shalt know that I am the Lord; for they shall not be ashamed that wait for Me.* Now this implies these two things.

1st, That hereby Men will be excited to give Honour to GOD: *Thou shalt know that I am the Lord.* Thou shalt see my Power and Goodness towards thee in such a Dispensation, so that by this I will bring Glory to my own Name, as well as Good to my Church and People. This, indeed, is the wonderful Work of GOD, and discovers his Power over the Hearts of Men. The Majesty of KINGS does not disrobe them of that depraved Nature which is common to all Men; but their exalted Station exposes them to much greater Temptations than others are obnoxious to. When such, therefore, are dispos'd to despise the glittering Glories of an Earthly Crown, and lay it at the Feet of Christ; when they govern their Actions entirely by the Rules of his Gospel, notwithstanding their many Temptations to the contrary; when they employ all their Interests only in Subserviency to that of
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their Redeemer; this is plainly *the Lord's doing*, and ought to be *Marvellous in our Eyes*. And there are some Circumstances wherein they will appear *Marvellous* in a peculiar manner; when the Church is bless'd with such Princes as are thus Zealous for its Interests, at a time when it has been in the greatest Danger, threatned with utter Destruction, and its Enemies Triumphant in its approaching Ruin.

It has been a common Case, from the first plantation of the Christian Church, for GOD thus to be *seen in the Mount of Difficulty*; and then He is seen to shine in Remarkable Lustre to all that do not wilfully shut their own Eyes. Thus again, when such Religious Princes are set up for the Defence of GOD's Church, at a time when they are least expected, or when they are plac'd upon their Thrones without the least Opposition from those who yet are *far from rejoicing* at their Advancement, nay, perhaps were but just before plotting to prevent it; when this is done by the unanimous Voice and Consent both of Friends and Enemies, this is certainly the wonderful Work of Heaven! Providence does then peculiarly interpose, and gives an affecting Instance of that encouraging Observation, That *whatever Devices are in the Hearts of Men, the Counsel of the Lord shall stand* *. And, to add no more
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* Prov. 19. 21.

under this Particular, G O D's directing, supporting, and preserving Religious K I N G S, notwithstanding all the Opposition, all the Difficulties, they meet with when they are thus acting for the Cause of C H R I S T, is commonly very astonishing. This is a Work of peculiar difficulty, the Devil and his Instruments being most deeply engag'd in opposition to it: And therefore the Hand of G O D is most remarkable in carrying them thro' it. So that they who seriously consider the Dispensation in all its circumstances, will know that He is a G O D who is *Wonderful in Counsel, and Excellent in Working* *.

2ly, That this will be a great Encouragement to our Hope and Confidence in G O D; *They shall not be ashamed that wait for Me*. Good Men are frequently describ'd as Persons that wait upon the L O R D; they commit their Cause and their Way unto him: In a time of difficulty, *Prayer* is their principal Refuge, and they esteem it their Happiness that they have a G O D to go to, when all human Help seems to have forsaken them. And one of the Properties of the Prayers of Good Men is, that they pray with Assurance that G O D will hear and answer them: They trust Him as a Friend, who will in due time vouchsafe them the Mercy they pray for, as know-
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* Isa. 28. 29.

ing that He has *never said to the Seed of Jacob, Seek ye my Face in vain* *? This is meant by the Duty of waiting upon God. And this is a Duty which is always attended with Success, either sooner or later; God never *forakes them that seek him, but they that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, that cannot be remov'd* †. So that such Persons need not be asham'd of their Trust in God, as they would be apt to be if they were disappointed in their Expectations from him. And when God blesses his Church and People, by giving them Religious Princes to rule over them, He does that which is a vast Encouragement to their Faith and Hope: Their Enemies are disappointed, but to them it is as Life from the Dead. This convinces 'em that their former Hopes were not without a good Foundation; and it animates 'em to continue waiting, because they find by Experience, that not only He is able to save, but as willing as He is able. Sometimes God suffers Princes to arise who persecute the Church, instead of being Nursing-Fathers to it; and then the Psalmist observes the Confidence of her Ungodly Enemies runs high, *The Wicked walk on every side, when the Vilest Men are exalted* ||. And as the Hopes of the Wicked encrease upon such an occasion, so do the Fears of the Right-

* Isa. 45. 19. † Psal. 25. 1. & 9. 10. || Psal. 12. 10.

Righteous: They don't utterly despair, but hope even against Hope: They consider GOD as their strong Tower, and the GOD of Temporal as well as Eternal Salvation, under which notion they can't but absolutely trust him in the way of their Duty. But when they look to outward Appearances and second Causes, by an Eye of Sense; when they turn their Thoughts only upon the Cloud which thickens over their Heads, and consider how dark and dreary every thing looks round about them, their Hearts almost die within them. Now when these Fears are happily disappointed, then have we more reason to blush for our Distrust of GOD, than to be ashamed of our Hope in him. I shall only add, that this is an Encouragement to Faith in that Promise, the fulfilment of which all Good Men earnestly hope and pray for, That *the Gates of Hell shall never prevail against the Church of GOD*, but that it shall be preserv'd as long as the Sun and Moon shall endure. GOD has expressly declar'd this, and therefore we may and ought to wait upon Him for it. And what has been discours'd upon these words, confirms the Truth of it; GOD can raise up the most powerful Instruments to promote his Interest in the World: He can never want Means to fulfill his Promises; tho', if he did, He
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could do it without them. He can make the Earth to help the Woman, and out of that order of Men, among whom too many have been violent Opposers, can influence others to be the strenuous Asserters of his Kingdom.

And thus I have gone thro' the three General Heads I propos'd to speak to from these words: I shall conclude this Discourse with a brief *Application* in these few Particulars.

1st, Let the want or loss of such Religious Princes be deeply lamented by us: If they are so great a Blessing when they are given to a Nation, it must be as great a Calamity when they are taken away from it. The Prophecy of my Text has been made good to Us in *these* Kingdoms in repeated Instances. The Pious King *Edward* the Sixth, the Immortal Queen *Elizabeth*, those two Bright Stars in Conjunction King *William* and Queen *Mary*, of Glorious Memory, &c. will justly be renown'd in History for a Holy Zeal for the *Protestant Cause*, which certainly is the Cause of GOD. What they did and suffer'd upon the account of it, entitles them to the Character in my Text: And who can, without Tears, reflect upon the loss of those who were as so many Parents to their People; and which could only be made up by their being succeeded by a
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Prince of the same Temper and Disposition? If the loss of a natural Father and Mother is to be lamented, how much more should we be afflicted when we are depriv'd of those who stood in a double Relation, both Natural and Spiritual, not only to ourselves, but to the whole Body of their People; who were the Protectors of our Liberties, and the Defenders of our Faith, and to whom we owe it, that Religion and Property, in opposition to Popery and Slavery, have been preserv'd among us to this Happy Day? Such Losses are the apparent Hand of God upon a Nation for their Sins. It had been more lamentable never to have enjoy'd the Blessing; but to be depriv'd of it, is plainly a Judgment sent from an angry God, and therefore should deeply Affect and Humble us.

2dly, Let us be thankful, when our Lot is cast under such a Government as has been describ'd to us. That we have such a Prince by a remarkable Providence now set over us, we cannot doubt. His known Zeal for the Protestant Religion evidently proves it. He who has been a Father to His People in another part of Europe, we have all the reason in the World to believe will be so to us too. After many violent Shocks and Convulsions, thro' the good Hand of our God upon us, we have now

Prospect of a Lasting Settlement, if our Divisions and other Sins do not prevent it. What indeed may we not expect from a Prince, whose Experience in Government, whose Conduct and Courage in the Field, and whose un stain'd Reputation, as to Morality and Virtue, have made Him equally amiable to his Friends, and formidable to his Enemies? 'Tis describ'd in Scripture as the Felicity of a Nation when *their KING is the Son of Nobles* *. Our's has the Blood of KINGS running in His Veins. But our principal Advantage is, that He is both Qualify'd and Dispos'd to be a *Nursing-Father*, under whom we may hope Religion will be maintain'd, and its Dying Interests Reviv'd among us. Nor is it the least part of our Felicity that He is not alone, but attended with a PROTESTANT SON, and others in the Royal Family, bred up in the same Religion, from whom therefore we may expect the same Advantages, so that our Children shall *call them Blessed*. And while I mention this, I cannot but Revive the Memory of that Incomparable Princess *Sophia*, whom God has lately remov'd to a more Glorious Crown than that which was entail'd upon her in this World, whose Honour is to have left us

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* Eccl. 10. 17.

this Race of KINGS, who we hope will Reign prosperously over these Kingdoms to many Generations. Nor can we forget the late Revolution, to which, under God, we are indebted for them all; and those *Worthy Patriots* who so unanimously conspir'd to leave us in these Happy Circumstances. These are Mercies we ought to be exceeding thankful for, and God Grant we may never want Hearts to be so. But then we ought to express our Thankfulness by Reformation and Obedience. God has done Great Things for us, but we are not altogether without Danger: There is a *Popish Pretender* Abroad, and I wish I could say he has no Adherents here at Home. Our Deliverance from this Danger, and the perfecting the Happiness we have in View, depends upon the Divine Blessing; and the only way to be secur'd of this, is to return to God, from whom we have departed. If we *shall still do wickedly*, God has told us what we are to expect, that *we shall be consum'd, both we and our KING**. But if we *order our Conversations aright*, He will still *shew us his Salvation*. This is that *Praise* which they who *offer, glorifie God*†. Let the Thankfulness of our Hearts therefore appear in the Obedience of our Lives. In a particular

* 1 Sam. 12. 25. † Psal. 50. 23.

cular manner, let us lay aside our unhappy Divisions, which are provoking to God, and may be fatal to our selves. The general consent of Tongues and Hearts wherewith *His present Majesty* has been acknowledged, seems an Auspicious Omen. But, alas! in other respects, how far are we from being *of one Heart, and of one Way?* But we should take heed of *Biting one-another, lest we be devoured one of another* *. O! may the present Harmony, so far beyond our Fears, not only continue, but Issue in a more extensive Agreement as to the Things about which we differ. How unsuitable is a Contentious Temper to what the Spirit of God intimates in my Text, *viz.* That Good Men are all of the same Family? Is it not monstrous for the Children of the same Father, and the Persons that live under the same Roof, nay, standing in the nearest Relation to each other, to be always promoting one-another's Destruction? May this Disposition, which has wrought dismal Effects wherever it has prevail'd, and particularly in these Kingdoms, be with one Consent drop'd never to be reviv'd, and the Hopeful Beginning of this Reign prove a Presage of universal Concord among all Orders of Men. May we unite in Obedience to our
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* Gal. 5. 15.

Rightful and Lawful Sovereign, in Love to God, and Charity to each other. May a persecuting Spirit be totally rooted out of the Land, so that there may be *no more Destroying in all God's Holy Mountain*. I am far from thinking this is peculiar to one Sett of Men only; no! there is too much of the Spirit of Persecution in all Parties. May this be the Reign wherein it shall be utterly suppress'd on all Sides, every one considering, that nothing can be more opposite to the Spirit of Christianity, nor nothing render us more obnoxious to the Judgments of God, who *ordaineth his Arrows against the Persecuters**. Let not those who apprehend themselves to be on the rising Side insult their Neighbours, whom they may be apt imperiously to call the *Ruin'd Party*. 'Tis Inpolitick, as well as Unchristian to do so, seeing it may expose them also to be insulted in their turn. Briefly, If we would shew our Thankfulness as we ought, we should in all the Instances of a Religious Conversation demonstrate our Desires, that universal *Righteousness and Peace should kiss each other †*; and our confirmed Purposes, that since God has given us such a Deliverance as this, *we will no more break his Commandments* ||.

Lastly,

* Psal. 7. 13. † Psal. 85. 10. || Ezra 9. 13, 14.

Lastly, To our Thankfulness for Religious Governours, we should also joyn our most earnest Prayers to God for them. We are exhorted to pray in a particular manner for KINGS, *and all that are in Authority**. And those of them who are *Nursing-Fathers* to us, have a peculiar Claim to our most Hearty Addresses on their Behalf, by virtue of the Benefit we receive from them. Let us accordingly pray for him who (by the Providence of God and the Voice of the People) is Rightfully plac'd over these Nations, and whom we justly expect to find a Father to his Subjects. Let us be importunate at the Throne of Grace, that God would bless him in his Person and in his Government; that he would give him Wisdom as an Angel of God, and fill him with Resolution, that he may stand up, as he has hitherto done, for the *Protestant Cause Abroad*, and be a *Healer of our Breaches*, and *Restorer of Paths to dwell in †* at Home. Let us pray, that God would make him a *Terror to Evil-doers*, whatever Station they may be in; a Scourge to Tyrants, and one who shall *break in pieces the Oppressor ‡*. Let us pray, that under him *we may lead peaceable Lives in all Godliness and Honesty*, that Trade may Revive and Flourish, and, that we may, in an especial manner, go in and out of

* 1 Cor. 2. 12. † Isa. 58 12. Psal. 72. 4.

of God's Sanctuary and none make us afraid; and thus, that he may be a conspicuous Instrument of promoting our Temporal and Spiritual Prosperity. Let us pray, that GOD would give him the Necks of his Enemies, and that he may *tread upon their high Places* *; that he may Reign in Peace, and may have many Years to do so; that his Days may be lengthen'd out so, that the Crown may long flourish upon his Head, and that no Weapon form'd against him may prosper. And lastly, Let us pray, that God would bless him in his Royal Progeny, that he would Give the KING his Judgments, and his Righteousness to the KING'S SON †; and, that the illustrious Branches of the Royal Family may be bless'd both in their Souls and Bodies; and that God would Grant them in Health and Wealth long to live; that their successive Government over us may be Glorious to themselves, and Auspicious to us and our Posterity; and, that when God shall at last take them out of this World, they may Receive a Crown of Righteousness, which fadeth not away ||.

* Deut. 33. 29. † Psal. 72. 1. || 1 Pet. 5. 4.

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